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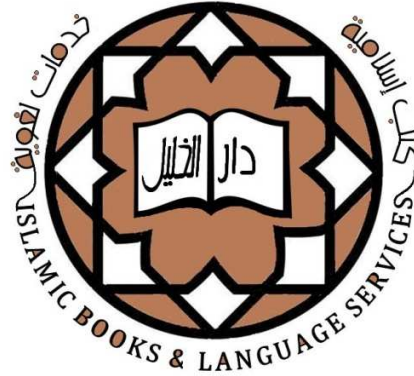
First of all, At-Tawheed, O you preachers of Islam

**Excerpt from the religious rulings of the renowned scholar of
Hadith “Muhammad Nassir ad-din al-Albani”**

(May Allah have mercy on him)

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In the name of Allah, the absolutely Merciful the entirely Merciful

Verily all praises are due to Allah, we praise Him, we seek His assistance, we seek His guidance, we seek His forgiveness and we seek refuge in Allah from the evil of ourselves and from our misdeeds.

Whoever Allah guides no one can misguide him, and whoever Allah misguides no one can guide him. And I testify that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah and I testify that Muhammad is His slave and His messenger.

{O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing all that He has ordered and by abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. (Obey Him, be thankful to Him, and remember Him always,) and die not except in a state of Islam [as Muslims (with complete submission to Allah)]} [Surah Al-Imran: 102]

{O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women; and fear Allah through Whom you demand (your mutual rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.} [Suran An-Nisa: 1]

{O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth. He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and will be admitted to Paradise)} [Al-Ahzab: 70-71]

This is one of the religious legal opinions given by the scholar and the expert in the science of Hadith (Prophetic narrations and tradition) Muhammad Nassir ad-dine al Albani (May Allah have mercy on his soul) which we singled out for printing because of its importance and because people are in need to it.

Question: Your eminence, there is no doubt that you are aware that the religious state of our Muslim nation is indeed a despicable one; pertaining to ignoring matters of creed, to its disunity in regards to the methodology or to its neglecting of propagating Islam in most of parts of the world according to the prime creed and methodology (that of the first generation of Islam) which led to the reforming of the Muslim nation

In fact, this sad reality has no doubt created a sense of zealous pride and concern among the sincere ones and a desire for change and for fixing the flaws. However, they did not agree on the manner in which to fix that state, due to their differences in the methodology and creed they adopt as your eminence already knows, through the multitude of Islamic organizations and movements claiming for decades to reform the Muslim nation. Nonetheless, they weren't successful but rather these movements caused great trouble and calamities for the Islamic nation because of its methodology and creed which opposes what the prophet (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him) came with; hence it inflicted confusion among the Muslims especially the youth on how to deal with that reality.

In fact, the preacher who firmly holds to the prophetic approach and who follows the course of the believers, embodied in the understanding of the companions and their followers in excellence among the Muslim scholars, might feel that he is bearing the great duty of reforming that reality or of participating in redressing it.

What's your advice to the followers of such movements and organizations?

What are the effective ways to redress that reality?

How can a Muslim relieve himself of responsibility in front of Allah, the all-Mighty and all-Majestic, during the Day of Judgment?

Answer: In addition to what have been mentioned in the question earlier regarding the deplorable situation of Muslims; I say that this sad reality is not as worse as it used to be for the Arabs during the pre-Islamic era when our prophet Muhammad (Allah's peace and blessings upon him) was sent to them, because the message is complete and is among us and because of the existence of the party that is upon the truth, that guides others by it and that calls people to the genuine Islam pertaining to creed, rituals, manners and the methodology.

There is no doubt that the reality of those Arabs during the pre-Islamic era is similar to numerous Muslim factions today.

Based on that, I say: The cure is the same cure as then, similar to what the prophet (peace and blessings upon him) used as a cure for the original pre-Islamic era. It is incumbent on all contemporary Muslim preachers to rectify the incorrect understanding of the meaning of "La Ilaha Illa Lah" and to use redress their harsh reality using that same cure.

This becomes clearly apparent if we contemplate the statement of Allah, the all-Mighty and all-Majestic: {Indeed in the Messenger of Allah (Muhammad) you have a good example to follow for him who hopes for (the meeting of Allah) Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much} [Al-Ahzab: 32]

Our prophet (Allah's peace and blessing upon him) is the good example to emulate in resolving the problems faced by Muslims during these

times and any other times. This requires from us to begin with what the prophet (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him) began with; first correcting what has been corrupted among the Muslims creed, second that which has been corrupted of their rituals, third what has been corrupted of their behaviorism.

I did not intend by that classification to separate the first point from the rest by starting with that which is most important then to the least one but rather I wanted the Muslims to give such a great importance to it, and by Muslims I mean the preachers or rather a better word to use is the scholars. Unfortunately, preachers nowadays include every Muslim even if he was destitute of knowledge, so they started considering themselves callers to Islam.

If we remember the famous rule, by famous I mean not only among the scholars only but among all persons with common sense, that rule says: "He who doesn't possess something cannot give it", then we definitely know that there is a large group among Muslims which accounts for millions and to whom all eyes are fixed when the word "preacher" is mentioned. What I mean by this group is the "Group of Tabligh" (conveying) or "Group of Da'wa (the call) even though most of them are just like what Allah, the All-Mighty All-Majestic, said: {But most of them know not}[Yunus: 55].

It is known from their way of preaching that they have completely turned away from giving any importance to the first principle, the most important matters of the matters mentioned earlier (i.e. Creed, rituals and behaviorism) and they have turned away from the reform that the prophet (Allah's peace and blessing upon him) began with, but rather what all the prophets began with and which Allah disclosed in His statement: {And verily, We have sent among every Ummah (community, nation) a Messenger (proclaiming): "Worship Allah (Alone), and avoid

(or keep away from) Taghut (all false deities, i.e. do not worship anything besides Allah)} [An-Nahl: 36]. They are not concerned with this established principle and first pillar of the pillars of Islam as it is known to all of the Muslims.

This is the same principle to which the first of the noble messenger, Nuh (Allah's blessing upon him), started calling to for almost a thousand year. Everyone knows that the previous heavenly revealed systems of law didn't contain rituals and dealings as detailed and specific as our religious system (i.e. Islam) because it is the religions that finalizes and seals all of the religious and bodies of law. Despite that, Nuh (Allah's blessing upon him) remained nine hundred and fifty years among his people spending all his time and energy calling to Tawheed and still his people turned away from his call. This is what Allah, the All-Mighty All-Majestic, referred to in the coherent and accurate revelation (i.e. The Koran): {And they have said: "You shall not leave your gods, nor shall you leave Wadd, nor Suwa', nor Yaghuth, nor Ya'uq, nor Nasr' (these are the names of their idols)} [Nuh: 23].

This is a clear cut proof that the most important thing that the preachers should always really give importance to is Tawheed and this is the meaning of the His statement, the All-Mighty All-Majestic: {So know (O Muhammad) that La ilaha illallah (none has the right to be worshipped by Allah)} [Muhammad: 19].

This was the practice of the prophet (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him) in his actions and his teachings.

As to the actions, there is no need for elaboration since during the Meccan period, the prophet's acts and missionary work was mostly confined to calling his tribesmen to the worship of Allah alone without any partner.

As to the teaching part, there is the narration of Anas ibn Malik (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him), reported in both Sahih (the collection of Al-Bukhari and Muslim of prophetic traditions), when the prophet (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him) sent Mu'adh to the Yemen and told him: "... let it be the first thing you call them to: the testimony that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah, and if they answer your call then".

The Prophet (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him) instructed his companions to begin with what he began with, calling to Tawheed. There is no doubt that there is a big difference between the pagans of that time, who perfectly understood what has been told to them in their native language, and between most of Arab Muslims nowadays, whom it is unnecessary to call them to pronounce "La Illaha Illallah" since all of them with their different ideologies and doctrines already say "La Illaha Illallah". However, in reality they are in need to understand the meaning of this pleasant statement. This is a major difference from the earliest Arabs, those whom when the messenger of Allah (Allah's blessings and salutation upon him) called them to say "La illaha illallah" they refused arrogantly as revealed explicitly in the noble Quran. Why they were arrogant? Because they understood that that statement (i.e. La illah illallah) requires from them not take with Allah equivalents and to worship none other than Allah while they were worshipping, calling unto, seeking succor, making a vow to fulfill an act of obedience from others than Allah, invoking Allah by the mean of others than Him, sacrificing to other than Him, seeking litigation or arbitration from any other legal system than the decree of Allah..Etc.

These were the paganistic and idolatrous acts they were committing even though that knew the requirements of the pleasant statement of "La Ilaha Illallah" from a linguistics stand; they had to disassociate

themselves from all these acts that contradict the meaning of “La Ilaha Illalah”.

Most of Muslims today who profess “La Ilaha Illalah” do not fully comprehend its meaning; rather, they might understand it completely in the opposite sense. Let me give you an example; one of them published a paper on the meaning of “La Illaha Illalah” and he explained it by “there is no God (i.e. creator, ruler and sustainer of all that exist) but Allah”.

This meaning is what the polytheists used to believe in and have adopted and still it didn’t benefit them. Allah said: {And verily, if you ask them:”Who created the heavens and the earth?” Surely, they will say: “Allah (has created them).”} [Az-Zumar: 38].

The polytheists used to believe that this universe had one creator without any partner, but they used to associate with Allah in His worship equivalents and partners. They believed in one God (i.e. creator, ruler and sustainer of all that exists) only but they believed in multiple deities (objects of reverence and worship). This is why Allah refuted this belief, which He called “the worship of others beside Him”, in His statement: {And those who take Auliya’ (protectors, helpers, lords, gods) besides Him (say): “We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah.”} [Az-Zumar: 3].

In fact the polytheists used to know that “La Ilaha Illalah” necessitates freeing and distancing oneself from the worship of anything besides Allah. On the contrary, the majority of Muslims today have interpreted the gentle statement of “La Ilaha Illalah” to mean “There is no god (Creator, Ruler and Sustainer) but Allah”.

So if a Muslim pronounces “La Ilaha Ila Lah” while worshiping others beside Him, then he is similar to the polytheists in their creed even if he

outwardly displayed Islam; since his utterance of “La Ilaha Illa Lah” makes him a Muslim on the surface.

Therefore, it is incumbent upon us as callers to Islam to call to Tawheed and to show to and establish evidence against those who have no knowledge of the meaning of “La Ilaha Illa Lah” while perpetrating that which contradicts it, to the contrary of the polytheist who refuses to say “La Ilaha Illa Lah”, hence making him not a Muslim inwardly and outwardly.

The Muslim masses are in fact Muslims because the Prophet (May Allah’s blessings and salutation be upon him) said: “And if they utter it (i.e. La Ilaha Illa Lah), then their blood and wealth become inviolable to me except for what concerns its rightful dues (i.e. La Illaha Illa Lah), and their accountability goes back to Allah” (*)

Therefore, I will make a statement which I rarely make, and that is; verily the reality of scores of Muslims today is worse than what the mass of pre-Islamic Arabs were upon and this concerning the misunderstanding of the pleasant statement (i.e. La Illaha Illa Lah). This is because the Arab polytheists understood but didn’t believe. However, the greater portion of Muslims today says what they do not believe in; they say “La Illaha Illa Lah” while they do not truly believe in its meaning.

(*) Narrated by Al-Bukhari (25) and Muslim (22) on the authority of Ibn Omar (May Allah be pleased with him).

For this reason, I believe that the primordial duty of genuine Muslim preachers is to continuously mumble about that statement and about clarifying its meaning succinctly and then in details about the exigencies of that pleasant statement, and that includes sincere devotion to Allah, The All-Majestic All-High, in all types of acts of worship since Allah, The All-Majestic All-High, when he reported the statement of the disbelievers: {... “We worship them only that they may bring us near to Allah”} [Az-Zumar: 3] He considered every act of worship directed to other than Allah disbelieving in the eloquent statement (i.e. La Illah Illa lah).

Therefore, today I say: There is no benefit in agglomerating and gathering Muslims into masses and then leaving them in their deviation without understanding the meaning of that eloquent statement; this will not benefit them in this life before the hereafter.

We all know the statement of the prophet (May Allah’s blessings and salutation be upon him): “whoever dies while sincerely testifying from his heart that none has the right to be worshiped but Allah, Allah will make his body inviolable for the hell fire” and in another narration: “... will enter paradise” (1)

So we can guarantee for the one who said it sincerely to enter paradise, even if it is after a delay and receiving punishment for the one who said it and who believes in the correct meaning of the lofty statement; since he will be punished for the sins and transgressions he committed. However, his fate at the end will be in paradise.

(1) Authentic Hadith. It has been reported in “The series of the authentic hadiths” (3355)

On the contrary, whoever says that pleasant state with his tongue while it hasn't reached his heart yet; then it will be to no avail to him in the hereafter. He might benefit in this life by being spared from being fought against or from being killed if the Muslims were in a position of power and dominion. As to the hereafter, it will not benefit him unless he firstly he said it knowing its meaning first and secondly believed in that meaning since understanding it doesn't suffice except if the understanding was accompanied by the belief. Regarding this point, I think most of the people are heedless of it which that understanding doesn't require the belief. But rather, each of the issues has to co-exist for the person to be considered a believer: The reason is because many of the people of the book, among the Christians and the Jews, used to know that the Muhammad (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him) was truthful in his claim of prophethood and messengership. Even with this knowledge, which our Lord, the All-Majestic All-High, has attested for them when He said: {... They recognize him (Muhammad or the Ka'bah at Makkah) as they recognize their sons}, and still this knowledge was to no avail to them with Allah. Why? Because they didn't believe in his claim of prophethood and messengership. For such, belief is preceded by knowledge and knowledge doesn't suffice by itself but rather it must be accompanied by belief and submissiveness; and the reason is because Allah, All-Majestic All-Mighty, said in His firmly and coherently sent down book: {So know (O Muhammad) that La ilaha illallah (none has the right to be worshipped but Allah), and ask for forgiveness for your sin} [Muhammad: 19].

Therefore, when a Muslim says: "La illaha ilallah" with his tongue, he must be combined with the comprehension of this statement in brief and in detail. If he comprehended, accepted as true, and believed in it, then the prophetic statements, which some of them I mentioned previously, apply to him. Among those prophetic statements which include the

detailed meaning mentioned earlier: “Whoever said La illaha Illalah, it will benefit him one day in his life” (1); meaning that this pleasant statement will save him from dwelling in the hell fire forever once he comprehended its meaning. I will have to reiterate this to make sure that it becomes engraved in your minds; he might not have fulfilled its requirements (i.e. the requirements of La ilaha Illalah), including perfecting righteous acts and abstaining from sinful acts, but has was safe from major shirk (associating partners with Allah in worship) and he fulfilled the requirements of the conditions of faith; including intrinsic acts – and extrinsic acts according to the interpretative judgment of some scholars and which is a matter of elaboration but not in this instance- and he is under the will (of Allah), he might enter Hell as a reward for the sins he has committed or the duties he failed to perform, and then this pleasant statement will save him or Allah, out of His graciousness and favor, will pardon him. This is what is meant by his previous statement (May Allah’s blessings and salutation be upon him): “Whoever said La ilaha Illalah, it will benefit him one day in his life”. On the contrary, whoever utters it with his tongue without comprehending its meaning, or he comprehended its meaning but didn’t believe in it, then this person, his statement of “La ilaha illallah” will not avail him except in this present life if he used to live under Islamic ruling and not in his afterlife.

Authentic Hadith. It has been reported in “The series of the authentic hadiths” (1932)

For this reason, it is essential to focus on calling to the Tawheed in every society or to an Islamic agglomeration truly and seriously aiming to what all of the Islamic groups are calling to, or most of them; that is the establishment of an Islamic society and of an Islamic State and which governs according to Allah's divine law any land that doesn't govern by Allah's divine law.

These groups and factions cannot realize the purpose they concurred to achieve and to vehemently strive to concretize it unless they start with what the prophet (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him) started with.

And I bring again to your attention that I do not intend by clarifying what is more important and then what is less important that preachers should limit themselves to calling to the pleasant statement and to understanding its meaning –After that Allah, the All-Mighty All Majestic, can completed His favor upon us by completing the religion- but rather it is incumbent on those preachers to uphold Islam in the aggregate. And while I am saying this, after the statement which can be summarized in the fact that preachers to Islam must give importance to the most important thing in Islam; that is expounding the authentic creed to Muslims and which emanates from the pleasant statement of “La Ilaha Illallah”, I want to bring to your attention that I do not mean by this proclamation that a Muslims must simply comprehend that the meaning of “La ilaha illa lah” is: “there is no deity worthy of worship in the existence except Allah”, but rather it also necessitates from him to comprehend the acts of worship which Allah, the All-Mighty All-Majestic deserves to be adored with. These details must be coupled along with the brief explanation of the meaning of the pleasant statement. It is noteworthy to give an example or more accordingly because a general explanation is not sufficient.

I say: Indeed numerous of the true Muslim monotheists (single out Allah in worship) and who do not direct any of their acts of worship to none other than Allah, the All-Mighty All-Majestic, their thoughts are void of many genuine ideologies and beliefs which have been mentioned in the Book and the Sunna. Many among those monotheists go over many of the verses of the Quran and parts of the Hadith, being oblivious to its content while it is indeed part of the perfection of the belief in Allah, the All-Mighty All-Majestic.

For example, the dogma of the loftiness of Allah, the All-Mighty All-Majestic, above His creation; I know from experience that many of our Salafi Unitarian brothers believe, just like we do, that Allah; The All-Mighty All-Majestic, is settled above His throne, without any interpretation or speculation on its manner (i.e. settling above). However, when a neo-Mu'tazili or a neo-Jahmi or a Maturidi or an Ash'ari confronts them with a dubious understanding of the apparent meaning of a verse which neither the tempter nor the tempted comprehend its meaning. Hence, he becomes dubious about his belief and strays from it, what's the reason? He was not indeed instructed the authentic belief from all of its aspects as elaborated in the Book of our Almighty and Majestic Lord and the narrations of our Prophet (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him). So when a neo-Mutazili says that Allah, the All-Mighty All-Majestic, says: {Do you feel secure that He who is in (over) the heaven...}, and this means that you have made your adored deity in a location; that is the created heaven. Thus he presents his dubious view to who is in front of him.

I want to show by this example that the creed of Tawheed, including its requisites and requirements, is unfortunately not clear in the minds of plenty of believed in the Salafi creed itself, let alone the rest who followed the Ash'ari, Maturidi or Jahmi doctrines in such a matter. I

want to point, through this example, which the matter is not as simple as some preachers might portray and who are in accord with us to calling to the Book and the Sunna. The matter is indeed not as simple as some of them claim to be and the reason lies in what we have demonstrated before regarding the difference between the disbelief of the fore-polytheists when they used to be called to pronounce “La Ilaha Illallah” they refused; because they comprehended the meaning of that pleasant statement, and between plenty of contemporary Muslims today when they utter that statement but they do not comprehend its correct meaning. That crucial difference is what exists here in such a doctrine, by which I mean the elevation of Allah, the All-Mighty All-Majestic, above the entirety of His creation, and this will need clarification.

It is not enough for a Muslim to believe that {The Most Gracious ascended above the Throne} and that “Be merciful to those who are in (on) the earth, the One who is in (on) the heavens will be merciful to you” (*) without knowing that the particle “in” mentioned in this Hadith is not a preposition for enclosed space, but it is similar to preposition “in” which was mentioned in the statement of the All-Exalted: {Do you feel secure that He who is in (over) the heaven...}, as “in” here means “over”. There are many and many supporting evidences on that; including the previously mentioned Hadith which is commonly mentioned on people’s tongues and which is considered authentic, all of the praises being to Allah, by considering its chains of narrations altogether.

(*) Authentic Hadith. It has been reported in “The series of the authentic hadiths” (925)

The meaning of his statement (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him) "Be merciful to those who are in (on) the earth" does not indicate the bugs and the worms that live underground but rather those that live on in the ground, including humans and animals, and this corresponds to his statement (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him): "... the One who is in (on) the heavens will be merciful to you" meaning: above the heavens; and those who accepted the call to the truth must have a clear understanding of such a detail. The widely known Hadith of the slave girl, the sheep herder, brings this concept closer to our understanding, but I will mention only, as evidence, the instance when the prophet (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him) asked her: "where is Allah?" she replied: "in the heavens" (*).

For example, If you ask today some of the grand scholars of the Azhar where is Allah? They would reply: "everywhere" while the slave girl replied that He is in the heavens and the prophet (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him) consented with her. Why? Because her answer was based on her natural instinct as she used to live, which we can refer to by the contemporary term, a salafi environment and which has not been blemished by the bad environment, as per the colloquial expression, because she has graduated, as per nowadays expression, from the school of the prophet (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him), and this school was not restricted to some gentlemen or some ladies in, specific but rather it was propagated among all of the people, including males and females, and encompassed the society in its entirety.

(*) Reported by Muslim (#537), narrated by Mu'awiyah ibn al-Hakam as-Sullamiyy (رضي الله عنه)

That is why the slave girl understood the creed because she was not contaminated by any of the bad environments; she understood the authentic creed contained in the Book and the Sunna and which many of those who claim knowledge of the Quran and the Sunna.

And today I say: There is no such clarity or lucidity among Muslims so that if you ask, I do not a girl shepherd, by the shepherd of a nation or a faction, he might get confused in his answer, just like many get confused about it, except those who Allah bestowed His mercy on, and they are a few.

Hence, calling to the Tawheed (unification of the worship of Allah) and instilling it in people's hearts requires from not to pass by the verses without elaboration; similar to the first era since they used to, first, easily understand the Arabic expressions and second, they didn't use to

have deviations or perversion in their creed originating from philosophy and scholasticism, thus giving rise to that which contradicts the sound creed. Our situation today completely differs from what the early Muslims were upon, so we shouldn't be under the illusion that calling to the authentic doctrine today is as easy as it was once during the first era. I will bring this closer to one's mind through an example which no two can dispute about (if Allah wills): Among the easiness known back then is that the companion used hear a hadith directly from the prophet (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him), and then the Tabi'i (*)

(*) Those who met the companions of the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) but didn't actually meet the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) while being a Muslim.

heard it directly from the companion, and so on until we stop at the end of the three centuries credited for its superiority. And we ask ourselves: “Was there something known as science of hadith?” the answer is: “no”. And “was there something known as science of critique (commending and discrediting narrators of hadith)?” the answer is: “no”.

However, nowadays a student of knowledge is in need of those both fields of science and they are considered among the obligations of Kifaya (*), to enable a scholar today from realizing if a hadith was authentic or not. So the matter is not anymore as easy as it was for a companion; as the companion to receive hadith from other companions who were commended by Allah’s testimony, The All-Majestic All-Lofty, etc...

What used to be easily accessible back then is not anymore concerning the immaculateness of the knowledge and the integrity of the sources. Thus, it is primordial to notice such a fact and to give due and appropriate consideration, being Muslims, when dealing with current problems that surround us, and which didn’t face the early Muslims as far as the corruption in the creed is concerned; and which caused ambiguities and uncertainties from advocates of deviancies, who drifted away from the genuine creed and the path of truth under different titles including: The call to the Book and the Sunna only as those who are affiliated with Scholasticism pretend and claim.

(*) Meaning that it is a mandatory science but not on specific group or person, but rather if a group learned it then they have relieved the rest of the community from the obligation of acquiring it.

It is noteworthy to mention some of the authentic hadiths to that effect, such as when the prophet (May Allah's blessings and salutation be upon him) the Ghuraraba (*) in some of these hadiths, he said: "They will have fifty times worth of the deeds", they asked: "among us or among themselves O messenger of Allah?", he replied: "from among you" (1).

This is the one of the consequences of the severe strangeness of Islam today which didn't exist during the early period. There no question that the strangeness of the early era was between outright polytheism and pure monotheism free from any flaw, and between manifest disbelief and sincere belief.

However nowadays, the problem is among Muslims themselves since their Tawheed is full of flaws and they direct worship to other than Allah while claiming to have faith. We must first pay attention to this issue and secondly, some individuals mustn't say: "We must indeed move to another phase other the phase of Tawheed ; that is political activism". The reason is because the call to Islam is a call to the truth first and foremost.

Hence, we shouldn't say: "We are Arabs and the Quran was sent from above in our language, keeping in mind that the Arabs today are the opposite of the non-Arabs who mastered Arabic (i.e. Arabists) since they

(*) It literally means "the strangers". They have been called such by the prophet (May Allah's blessing and salutation be upon him) because by their adherence to the way of the prophet and them threading the straight path they will be considered a minority and they will become strangers even among their own kin and country folks.

(1) An authentic hadith. It has been reported in the "The collection of the authentic hadiths"

are further from their language (i.e. Arabic) and this led to their distancing from the Book of their Supreme Lord and the way of their Prophet (May Allah's blessing and salutation be upon him.)

Let say we, the Arabs, have indeed acquired the correct understanding of Islam, still it is not incumbent upon us to get involved in political activities and to move the masses politically and to busy them with politics at the expense of what they should learn about Islam including the creed, acts of worship, transactions and etiquette.

I do not believe that there exists a nation, with a population by the millions, which has in fact comprehended Islam properly; I mean in the creed, acts of worship and behaviorism and has been raised in accordance to it.

This is we always bring up in all of our talks and we focus around the two essential points which are the basis for true change, and they are: at-Tasfiyah (purification) and Tarbiyah (educating). Both elements, Tasfiyah and Tarbiyah, are necessary. If there were to be a type of Tasfiyah (purification) in a country, it should be on the creed level, and this in itself is considered a major and great achievement if it occurred in a portion of our great Islamic nation (i.e. a nation among the nations).

As to the worship, it needs to be freed from the restrained factionalism (*) and to work towards returning to the authentic Sunna. There might be some prominent scholars who comprehended Islamic correctly from all of its angles, but I do not believe that a person, two, three, ten or twenty persons can carry the duty of Tasfiyah; the purification of Islam

(*) limiting oneself to an Islamic school of thought in specific and totally disregarding judicial views from other schools of thought

from all that is intrusive, whether on the level of creed, worship or behavior. A few persons cannot carry on the task of filtering intruding elements which have latched onto it and to educate those around the proper education. Both Tasfiyah and Tarbiyah are both missing.

Hence, any political movement in a Muslim society which doesn't rule by Divine Law, before these two important elements are implemented, will have a negative impact. It is the advice that has to replace political activism, in a country which rules by Divine Law, through consultation or by delivering the advice in a proper way and within the religious guidelines; by staying away from obligating speech or publicizing as notifying establishes evidence (against the one being notified) and relieves from responsibility (the one notifying). It is also part of giving advice to busy people with what's beneficial; such as correcting their creed, worship, manners and transactions.

Some of them might think that we want to realize Tarbiyah and Tasfiyah in the society as whole. This is what we do not think about nor dream about in our sleep because its realization is impossible and because

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kin and those who surround them according to this correct understanding of Islam.

Nowadays, busying oneself with politics is a preoccupation even we do not reject it, however, at the same time we believe indeed in the logical dogmatic chronological order in which we begin with the purification and education in matters of creed, and acts of worship in second, and then the manners. Then the day will come when we will have to integrate the political phase in its complete religious sense because politics stands for the managing the affairs of the nation. So who is supposed to be in charge of the affairs of the nation? The answer is: it is not the Zayd nor Bakr nor Omar (*) who sets up a political party or heads a political movement or leads a group! This matter is exclusive to the Head of the State to whom the people pledged allegiance and he is the one who must be aware of politics and current events.

If Muslims were not united, which is the case today, then each Head of the State must assume that responsibility to the extent of the limits of his power.

So we shouldn't preoccupy ourselves with issues which its understanding doesn't benefit us, even if we were to fully understand them, because we cannot govern it nor do we possess the authority to manage state affairs. That in itself is futile and with no potential gains.

Let's draw an example; the wars that are waged against Muslims is many numerous Muslim states, what is the benefit of stirring up the fervor of Muslims towards it while we cannot wage a holy war lead by a

(*) This is an Arabic expression which excludes any average or unspecified person. The closest expression in English is: "not any Tom, Dick and Harry".

responsible leader to whom allegiance was pledged? There is benefit to that and we do not say: “it is not mandated”, but we say: “it is rushing things before their time”.

Hence, we must preoccupy ourselves and those who we call to our message with teaching them the authentic Islam and to provide them with the correct education. As to occupying them with fervencies and ardent issues, then this will turn them away from fully comprehending the call which every capable (mentally and physically) person must fulfill; such as the rectification of the creed, acts of worship, manners. These are part of what is incumbent upon every individual to fulfill and if a person slacks in it then he shall not have an excuse.

As to other matters, some of it is part of the sufficing matters (i.e. if a group of people fulfills it then the rest are relieved from liability); such as what is known today as “Fiqh al-Waqi (current events awareness) and getting involved in politics, which is the duty of Ahl al-hal wa al-‘akd (*) since they can practically benefit from it. As to the acquisition of its knowledge (i.e. politics) by those individuals who do not possess public decision-making authority and who preoccupy the masses with what is less important from what is more important, then this is what will keep them away from proper understanding.

This is what we have experienced firsthand in the methodology of many of the current factions and Islamist groups, as we know that some of them turned away from teaching the Muslim youth, who flocked and gathered around those preachers in order to learn and understand the

(*) It is a council composed of statesmen, scholars, politicians, governors, and notables who make decisions regarding the affairs of the state. It is similar to what is known today as: “The Governing Council”

correct creed, worship and manners, and then some of these preachers got preoccupied with politics and joining the parliament which rules by other than divine law. So this distracted from the most important thing and they busied themselves with that which is of no importance considering the current situation.

As to the content of the question asking about how a Muslim can relieve himself from liability or his participation in changing this sad reality, we say: Every Muslim according to his capacity; a scholar among them has duties which are not incumbent upon other than a scholar.

On this occasion, I should mention that Allah, the All-Sublime All-Majestic, has indeed completed His favor upon us through His Book and made it the constitution of the believers; such the statement of Allah, The All-lofty: {So ask those who know the Scripture if you do not know} [An-Nahl: 43].

In fact, Allah, The All-Sublime All-Lofty, split the Muslim in to two; a scholar and a non-scholar, and He obligated upon each one what he didn't obligate upon the other one. So those who are not scholars must ask people of knowledge, and the scholars must answer what they're inquiring about. In this perspective, obligations vary based on the differences between individuals. So a scholar today must call people to the message of truth within his abilities and the non-scholar must inquire about what concerns his own obligations or of the persons under his care; such as a wife or a child or anyone like that. So if a Muslim from any of both sides fulfills his duties to the best of his abilities then he will achieve salvation since Allah, The All-Sublime All-Majestic, says: {Allah doesn't burden a soul except with that which is within its scope of capacity} [Al-Baqarah: 286].

Unfortunately, we live today in a calamity which has afflicted Muslims and which has no precedent in history; that is the conspiracy of the disbelievers against Muslims exactly as the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) informed about in the simile used in his famous hadith, and the correct text is: “Other nations will conspire against you like the eaters would call each other and gather around their platter (with food served in it)”. They asked: “O messenger of Allah! Is it because we will be small in number then?” He replied: “No, you will be then great in number but you will be insignificant just like the foam and the debris carried by the stream. And Allah will surely take away fear and apprehension from the hearts of your enemy and He will surely cast feebleness in your heart.” They asked: “Feebleness from what?” He replied: “From cherishing life and detesting death” (1).

Hence, it is incumbent upon scholars to exert effort in the Tasfiya and Tarbiya by teaching Muslims the correct belief and by correcting creeds, worships and manners, and each one according to his ability. The reason is because they cannot fight against the Jews united as long as their current state of schism exists; not a single country or a single row unites them, they will not be able to militarily defend themselves against the enemies who have conspired against them. However, they have adopted any of the divinely legislated means within their means since we do not possess the material capabilities. And even if we did, we would not be able to make any move since there are many government entities, authorities and rulers in numerous Muslim countries who have adopted politics which, unfortunately, are not compatible with the Islamically conform politics.

(1) An authentic hadith. It has been reported in the “The collection of the authentic hadiths” (#985)

However, we are capable of realizing the two matters mentioned earlier, by Allah's permission, and which are: Tassfiya and Tarbiya. And when the Islamic preachers carry on this highly important duty in a country which doesn't have politics that disagree with the religiously established politics and they unite upon this principle, then I believe that day Allah's statement: {And that day the believers will rejoice} [ar-Rum: 4] will hold true for them.

Therefore, a Muslim's obligation is to act according to his abilities and Allah's doesn't burden a soul except what falls within its capacities. It is not a requirement to simultaneously establish the correct Tawheed and worship with the setting up of an Islamic state in a country which doesn't rule according to Allah's divine law because the first thing we begin by in ruling according to Allah's divine law is the establishment of Tawheed. There are some special instances which occurred during some periods; that is when seclusion becomes more preferable than mixing with the general population. So a Muslim goes in seclusion to a valley where he worships his supreme Lord and saves himself from the malice of others and them from his malice. There are numerous Hadith which have been reported to that effect even though initially, as reported in the Hadith of Ibn Omar (May Allah be pleased with him and his father): "The believer who mixes with people and bears patiently their ill-treatment is better than the believer who doesn't mix with people and doesn't bear patiently their ill-treatment" (1).

Hence, there is no doubt that the Islamic State is a mean to rule according to Allah's divine law on earth and not an end in itself.

(1) An authentic hadith. It has been reported in the "The collection of the authentic hadiths" (#939)

What's strange is that some preachers concentrate their efforts on that which they cannot achieve while ignoring that which is mandatory and accessible. And that is by making every effort and inconveniencing themselves, just like the Muslim preacher who was advising his followers: "Establish the Islamic state within yourselves and it (i.e. Islamic state) will be established for you in your land". Still we find out that plenty of his followers contradict this since they concentrate most of their missionary work on calling to the singling out of Allah, the All-Sublime All-Majestic, with the right of judgment and legislation "Tawheed al-Hakimiyya", and they use for it the commonly known expression: "Ruling and Judgment belongs to Allah". There is no question that ruling and judgment belongs solely to Allah without any partner, in it or in anything else. However, there are among them those who strictly adhere to one of the four judicial schools of thought that exist today, and when the true and clear Sunna(*) comes to his knowledge, he then says: "This contradicts my school of thought"; so where is the ruling by Allah's divine law in following the Sunna?! There is also among them those who worship Allah in the light of a Sufi order (**); so where is here the ruling by Allah's divine teaching of Tawheed?! So they expect from others what they do not expect from themselves.

(*) The term "Sunna" refers to the way of the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) including his statements and acts especially in what pertains to religious matters.

(**) It is a movement which started as a way of asceticism in its early stage and then developed into innovated methods of worship which contradict the fundamentals of Islam. They give importance to spirituality and purification of the soul more than they do to the Sunna of the prophet (صلى الله عليه وسلم) and his companions.

It is very easy to apply Allah's divine ruling, in matters of creed, worship and manners, within your household, in raising your kids and in your business transactions (selling and buying). Meanwhile, it is very difficult to obligate, or even to depose the ruler who doesn't rule according to Allah's divine law in many of his rulings. So why would you prefer that which is hard to that which is easier?

This implies two things: Either there is a lack of proper education and guidance or a deficiency in their creed which pushes them to focus their efforts to that which they cannot realize at the expense of that which is within their reach.

As of now, my only advice is to completely exert all efforts on Tasfiya and Tarbiya and to call people to the correct belief and worship each one within his capabilities, and Allah doesn't burden a soul more than it can bear.

**May all praises be to Allah, and the blessings and salutation of Allah
be upon His prophet, his household and the entirety of his
companions**
